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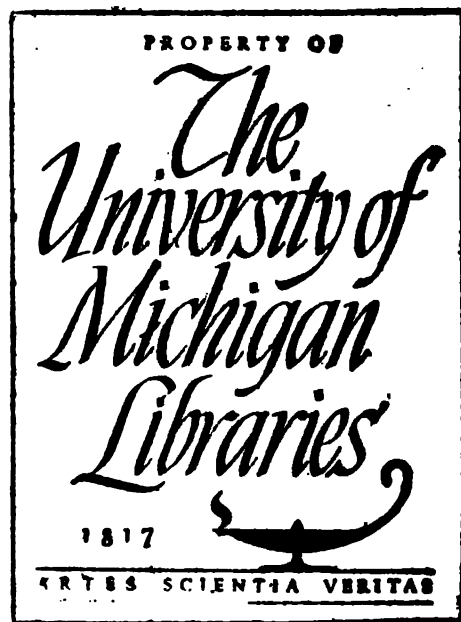
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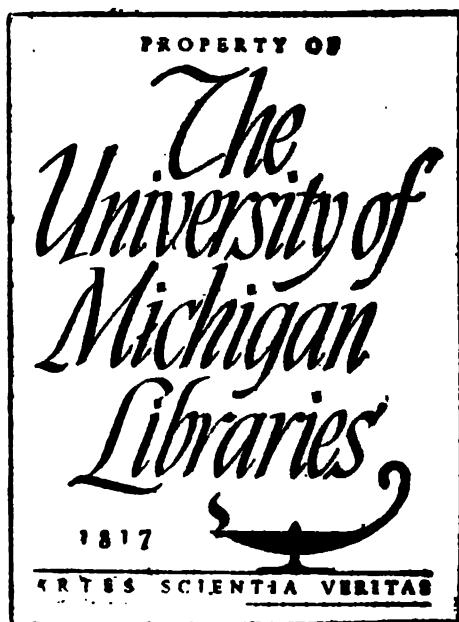
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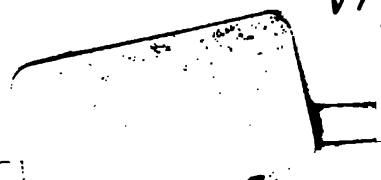
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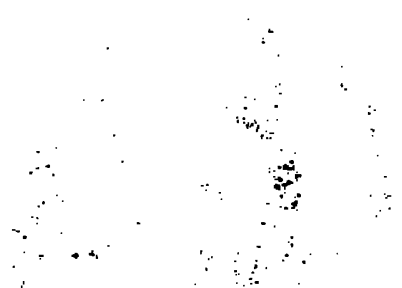




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LETTERS

18057

FROM

THE HON. HENRY WODEHOUSE,

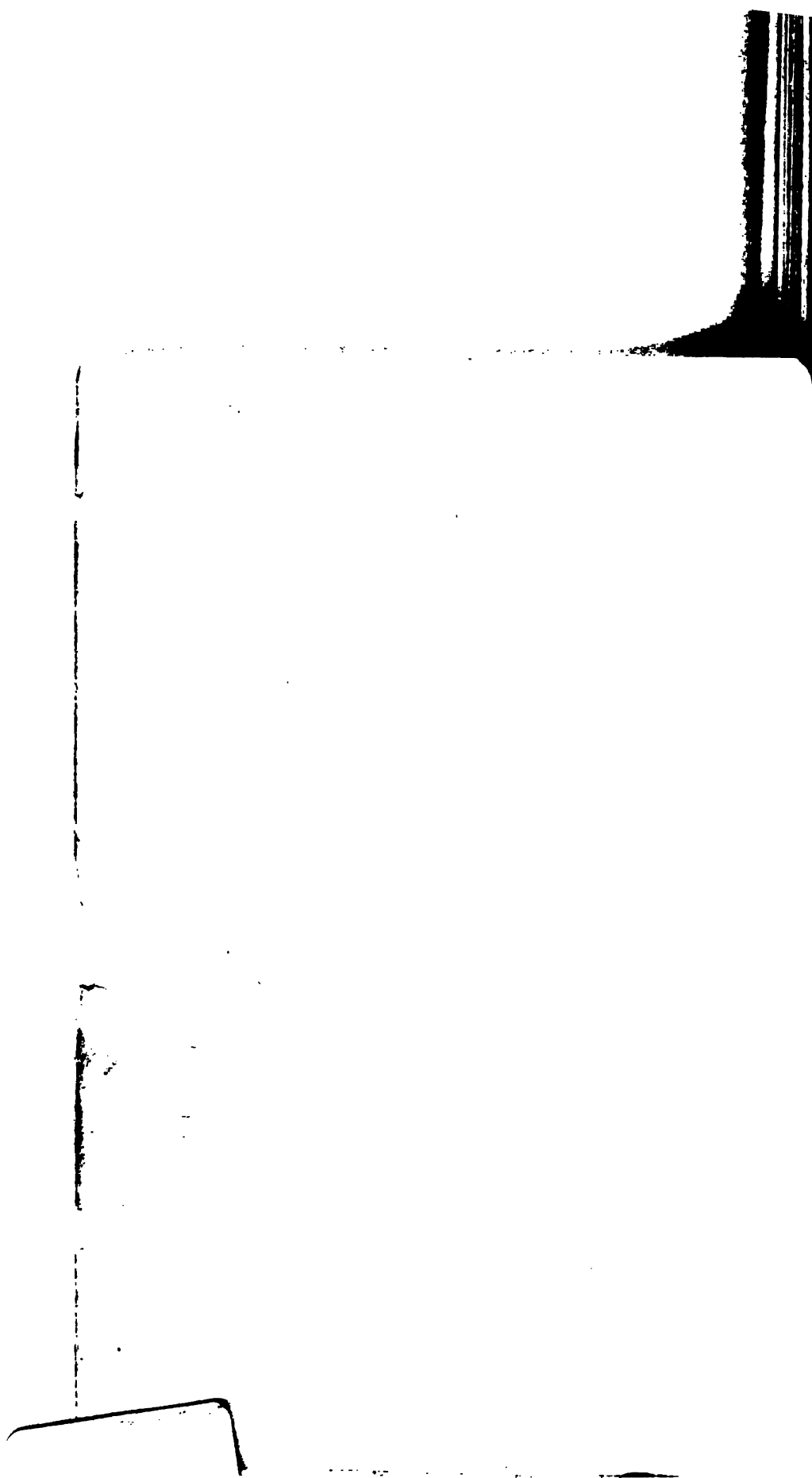
Late Secretary of Her Majesty's Legation at Athens.

1870-71.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

1874.





THESE letters, written from Paris and Versailles in the course of the nine months which intervened between the defeat of the French armies before Metz and the fall of the Commune, have been printed for presentation to Henry Wodehouse's friends, in the hope that they will be valued not only as a memorial of him, but also as records of an eventful period.

Some extracts from his diary and a few other papers have been added to complete the narrative.

Mr. Wodehouse returned to Paris from leave of absence a few days before the surrender at Sédan and the fall of the Empire. After the departure of Lord Lyons to Tours on the 17th of September, he remained in charge of the Embassy, all the other members of it having left Paris, with the exception



of Colonel Claremont and Captain Hore, the Military and Naval Attachés. On the 8th of November Mr. Wodehouse, acting under instructions from Her Majesty's Government, left Paris with a number of British subjects for whose exit permission had been obtained from the Prussian authorities. He passed through the French and German lines to Versailles and arrived in London on the 18th of November. He remained in England until the 10th of February, 1871, when, an armistice having been concluded between France and Germany, he was ordered to return to Paris, where he arrived in time to witness the entry of the German troops. On the establishment of the Commune and the retreat of the Government from Paris, Mr. Wodehouse accompanied Lord Lyons to Versailles. He remained there during the military operations carried on by M. Thiers' Government against the Commune, and returned to Paris after its capture by the army of Versailles.

P. C.

London, January 1874.



My dear Philip, *Paris, August 28, 1870.*

I DULY arrived last night. The stations were full of troops starting—I believe, 4th battalions of old soldiers—they were not very gay, but they looked like business. Paris is quiet, the people look rather dejected, but they evidently do not at all think they are beaten yet, and are confident of being able to defend Paris; the fortifications are ready, and there seems to be no want of defenders of one sort or the other; the streets are full of men in uniforms of every description, and there are some carrying muskets, who are dressed in ordinary blouses,—I suppose they are National Guards. I hear the Bois is quite full of cattle and sheep, and they say there are provisions enough in Paris for a month at least. Sanguine people think that the Crown Prince is rushing to his destruction, and are sorry at the report this afternoon that he is retiring. Everything is going on much as usual, the cafés and restaurants open and pretty full,

but there is an absence of the *flâneur* element, and very few carriages and no *cocottes* and *crevés* to be seen; every one looks grave and pre-occupied, and all day there are carts and cabs passing laden with furniture and household effects. The Bois is not cut down, but thinned in parts, and the entrances are walled up. We thought this morning that the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Embassies would leave for Bourges, a place in the middle of France, but it appears that La Tour d'Auvergne has announced his intention of staying, whatever happens. I confess I would rather depart, for it is too sad here; the spectacle of these poor people trying not to look humiliated is *navrant*, and besides they look very suspiciously at all foreigners and are fearfully irritated against England—all the doing of the English newspapers. What with passports and other work, we are kept at work from morning till night, but it is on the whole a good thing as there is nothing on earth else to do; the Bois closed, the Tennis Court shut, and no one seems to like going to the clubs or into society of any kind where one meets the natives, and of course there are very few foreigners left. The *cocottes* have mostly taken flight some time ago, the *cafés chantants* still go on but are half empty, and the English Alhambra Company drags on a miserable existence at the Châtelet; it is under the management of Strange, and has been open a fortnight only—a profitable speculation! I breakfasted at Bignon's;



3

the *bourgeois** was actually himself on guard to-day as a *national sédentaire*. Henri† and all the others were there as usual; they are also Nationals, but have not been out yet. Henri was pale but firm; he said they had as much to do as usual, and there was no difficulty about provisions, the prices exactly as usual. The Embassy is besieged by Britishers, male and female, in a most agitated state, asking what they are to do, and what will become of them and their property in the event of the Prussians, or, what is quite as likely, a revolution. However, I don't think there is any appearance of a row yet; a large number of the vagabond class have been turned out, and there must be soldiers and sailors enough to keep order. No one says or cares anything about the Emperor, it is evidently all over with him whatever happens; they say he is perfectly calm.

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Philip, *Paris, August 30, 1870.*

I HAD not a minute to write to you yesterday; the work was uninterrupted all day, from 9 in the morning till 7, besides telegrams at night. I am

* M. Bignon, proprietor of the Restaurant, at the corner of the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin.

† The well-known head-waiter at the same establishment.

rather amused at hearing of M. — having got off going to fight on the plea that he is the only support of an aged mother.

August 31.

The exodus and *déménagement* still continue, and the number of troops passing and repassing is wonderful: they are mostly I fancy old soldiers, at all events they are certainly not raw recruits. I cannot believe it is all up with the French, and if there is anything like the number of troops they say with MacMahon and Bazaine, they may yet gain a victory before Metz. Every day gained now is evidently an immense advantage to them, and if all these preparations had been made before the war began, the history of the war would have been different. The question now is whether it is too late; I think not, if they are determined to fight to the last, but, if so, they must make up their minds to the possibility of Paris being taken, and prepare to continue the war in other parts of France. The forts will no doubt hold out for some time, but I cannot conceive it possible to hold the fortifications, as Paris would then be all burnt in no time. Lord Lyons is quite in his element with all this work; he makes no change, and drives in his open carriage with the stepping horses as usual; he says that the only difference which will be made in the Embassy is, that when the siege has begun, the servants will be allowed to wait at dinner in trowsers. He has to day



seen the Empress, and says that her attitude under the present circumstances is perfect, just what it ought to be. I had a sort of return of my old attacks on Monday night, I suppose in consequence of the fatigue during the day, and being rather out of sorts after a rough passage across on Saturday. It was not a bad one, but I was kept awake all night, and had an opportunity of observing the movement going on, perpetual strings of carts passing my windows without cessation till morning. I have not had time to go to the Bois ; they say it is a wonderful sight, thousands of cattle and sheep taking up the whole place. Julianne* has been here in a dreadful state of mind. I got Philippe's passport *visé* by the Americans, and advised him to be off at once, he was to go to England to day. The son has decided to remain and be a Frenchman, and I sent him and Julianne off to day with a letter to the Préfecture de Police, by means of which I hope he will get a permit from the Governor of Paris. It appears that his place at the Hotel de Bade is better than the one *chez* Trombetta at Turin, and he was ill and unwilling to expatriate himself, or rather to become a German and bolt, which was the only alternative. I don't know when I shall have time to go to the curiosity shops, but tell Bertram I have not forgotten his commission. I hope the Britishers have mostly departed ; there were

* The French housekeeper of Mr. F. G. Currie, married to a German.

fewer to day, and at all events the most distracted ones have already fled; the trains will soon cease running to Calais—last night no luggage was allowed to be taken. I shall be very glad when this part of the business is over, as the noise made by these people all day is distracting, and dealing with them is very trying to the temper, and very often to decide whether they are to have passports or not is no easy matter. There was a report of Uhlans having been seen at Melun, not far from Paris, but I don't believe it; all sorts of stories are put about, and no one seems to know anything for certain. I hear Arago, the *irréconciliable*, said the other night that, if the Emperor gained a victory, he would recover his position yet, which surprises me, but anything is possible in this country.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

Dear Philip,

Paris, September 4, 1870.

I HAVE been trying to find a minute to sit down to write you the news for several days past, and now events have gone so fast that I don't know where to begin. Yesterday the situation was most extraordinary. We got your telegram announcing the collapse at about three o'clock in the afternoon, and the news was not known here till the evening; in



the meantime people went on saying that it was going to be all right; that the armies must be victorious, but that nothing decisive had yet taken place. Under the circumstances, this sustained attempt at swagger is very painful to witness.

There were some rows on the Boulevards last night, and I hear the police used their revolvers freely, and several people were killed. I walked about a little in the evening, but saw no disturbance, beyond crowds of ragamuffins parading the streets and shouting "Vive Trochu, à bas les Prussiens," &c. I am rather shy about going about, as it would be no joke being arrested as a spy. Numbers of Britishers have been taken up, and we have infinite trouble in getting them out. One unfortunate wretch was arrested twice; the second time he was convinced he was about to be shot, and had written an adieu to his wife in the lining of his hat. Sala, the "Daily Telegraph" correspondent, was bagged last night at the Café du Helder. Saumarez has just been to the Préfecture and got him out; he was in a piteous state, having been ill-used by his fellow-prisoners in the cells during the night. His papers which he had with him were *en règle*, but no one paid any attention to them. We wanted to sup the night before last, and went to the Café Anglais, having found the Trois Frères shut up! We seemed to be the only people there, and the Boulevards were empty—a wonderful contrast to the usual scene there.

bolted. Gambetta and others of the
keep the doors shut, and push the
to no purpose, and at last a dirty,
ruffian got into the President's chair, l
and two National Guards seized him
him down below. Every one shout
République !" and Gambetta, Jules Fav
tried to speak, but were unable to mak
heard. I do not know yet how all t
an end. All the day the Boulevards ha
of people shouting and yelling. Mot
Nationaux, soldiers of the line, Francs
Blouses, mixed up together ; every one
lighted, and it is like a great *fête de*
knows what will happen in the night, l
hardly think it can pass over peaceably
roughs improving the occasion. The
Empress is gone to Chimay, in Belgium,
little Louis. I hope she is, poor won



so; so, if they are mad enough to go on with the war, I suppose we shall see Paris a mass of ruins, like Strasbourg, before many days are over. "Traîtres" and "espions" are the favourite words now. England is supposed to have had something to do with it, and some of these ignorant brutes even have gone so far as to say and believe that English and other foreign armies came up to assist the Prussians in the last fights. The mob have made short work already of the Imperial insignia; they have even cut the heads off two Imperial eagles in front of the Ministère de la Marine! It is an interesting moment, I might even say *émouvant*. I found Lord Lyons in the midst of the excitement, when the people were trooping back from the Corps Législatif, engaged in the composition of a despatch on Tunisian finance! Tell Bertram I have been the rounds of the *bric-à-brac* shops; they have not abated their prices; the moment will perhaps come later. Miallet declined to take a centime less than 14,000 francs for his tapestry. I shall go to see the *citoyen* Bignon this evening. Durand's was shut this morning, but I shall expect to find the valiant Henri at his post.

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

Dear Philip,

Paris, September 6, 1870.

I SEE that we have orders to stay and see it out. I suppose the fun will soon begin. I cannot believe that it will last long; the people are already beginning to cry out that they are betrayed, and have no guns or ammunition, and that their cartridges are made of sand, &c. There is a great deal of marching and singing and spy-catching still; but there are more gloomy faces, and no wonder. A tall Irish priest, dressed something like an Anabaptist in the *Prophète*, was brought to the Embassy this morning by two armed patriots. I gave him a passport, and got them to release him. I have succeeded in getting a pass from Trochu, which is a comfort, as it really was not safe to go about without one. We are still beset all day by British subjects in great distress; women crying, and asking to be allowed to send their valuables to the Embassy, which we refuse to permit, as Lord Lyons has decided that, if things were known to be stored here, it would make the Embassy an object for pillage. I don't know whether I told you that Dr. * * * *, who was sent by the Government to inspect hospitals, was arrested as a spy, but let out again, after a short detention by

Yours



11

the police. It was not wonderful, as he can't speak
a word of French! No time for more.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

P.S. I suppose this is the last time the messenger
will be able to go by rail to Calais.

GOVERNEMENT DE LA DÉFENSE NATIONALE.

SAUF-CONDUIT

délivré à Monsieur Wodehouse, 2^{me} Secrétaire à
l'Ambassade d'Angleterre à Paris.

A Paris, le 5 Septembre, 1870.

Le Président du Gouvernement,
Gouverneur de Paris,
(Signé) TROCHU.

(Le Gouverneur
de
Paris.)

Dear Philip, *Paris, September 7, 1870.*

LORD LYONS' despatches and Claremont's will tell you the state of things here. It is too melancholy. To-day it has been raining incessantly, and the dirty, demoralized appearance of the soldiers is pitiable.

The best chance for Paris is that the Prussians should come in as soon as possible; they say that the roughs of Belleville have been kept quiet with the promise that they shall have plenty of pillaging when the National Guards are on the ramparts. The Embassy will have a bad chance in that case, as the "Liberté" has had the kindness to state that there are immense stores of valuables in it belonging to British subjects. There are lots of people here who have been with the armies: their accounts are horrible; they seem all to agree that in the last engagements the French were completely demoralized.

Your affectionate.

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Mother, *Paris, September 7, 1870.*

It is not yet decided when we are to leave, but I don't expect that we shall have to remain when the siege begins. We are sure to be able to get out safe,



but I fancy we shall have to leave by road. Most of the lines are already cut. There have been no disorders in Paris yet, but the defenders look very much demoralized, and I doubt their holding out long when the siege begins. I only hope they may be kept quiet, and agree to terms with the Prussians. All agree that the defence is hopeless, but no one cares to avow it. Paris is a sad spectacle.

No time for more.

Your most affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Philip, *Paris, September 10, 1870.*

ALL watering has ceased to-day, and Paris is like the desert of Sahara. There is no want of defenders, at any rate; every other man one meets is armed or accoutred in some fashion. I begin to think we shall make a good fight of it. L * * *, who knows everything, informs us that the Empress is still in Paris, but we have known for some days what I believe to be the authentic story. She passed Sunday night at the house of a friend, and left on Monday morning for Deauville, where she got on board an English yacht. Have you seen Sala's account in yesterday's "Telegraph," of his capture and release by the

"Captain?"* Bowles, of "Vanity Fair," who corresponds for the "Globe," has just been here; he was caught outside the town by some cavalry soldiers this morning, and taken into one of the forts, but they were civil, and released him, after examination by the Commandant. When the crowd forced their way into the Tuileries' gardens on Sunday Lesseps happened to be there, and he says that, knowing something of the advantages of a canal, he suggested that it would be advisable to open the gates in the centre of the palace, which was done, and the stream passed through accordingly into the Place du Carrousel, and no injury was done. Rather a good *bon mot*. Fleury is reported to have said, when he heard of the collapse, "Enfin nous sommes f——s, mais nous nous sommes bien amusés pendant vingt ans." The walls are covered with proclamations and notices of all kinds, amongst others the following lively ones—that the theatres are shut, and turned into hospitals, and that the cemeteries in the town, which had been closed, are now re-opened. To-day there seems to be a lull in the work; hitherto we have been writing every day and all day for our lives. Some of the applications which have been made to the Embassy are droll enough: one gentleman states, in claiming a passport, that he is seventy years old and six feet high! Another demands a flag from the Embassy, but says he will dispense

* Hon. J. Saumarez, Attaché to the Embassy.



with the staff. A few soldiers—about 300 Zouaves and some officers—cut their way through from Sedan, and have arrived here, amongst others, a friend of Claremont. It is said that MacMahon was reluctant to make the attempt to relieve Bazaine, but received positive orders to do so from Palikao; he would have given it up and retreated from Mezieres, but Palikao insisted on his going on.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

Dear Philip, *Paris, September 13, 1870.*

I HAVE no time to write; Malet being off to see Bismarck, and the married men, Lascelles and Atlee, having been sent out of range to their families, we are reduced to three.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Philip, *Paris, September 15, 1870.*

THE monotony of our life goes on as usual; nothing but work, work, inside the Embassy, and drill, drill, outside. It makes me quite sick to see these poor

devils being prepared for the shambles. All through the day it goes on in every corner of Paris. They are mostly provincials, good-looking youths enough, very simple-looking, and quiet and well-behaved, and no doubt in a short time they would make excellent troops ; but at present they are an armed mob at the best. Many at the review had positively no arms at all, others rifles, some few Chassepots. They are, moreover, most deficient in officers. I see many of my friends amongst them, who say themselves they know but little about it ; and as for generals, I believe there are positively only four in Paris, and those, except Trochu, old cripples. I hear, also, but poor accounts of the forts and of the artillery in them. Altogether, I am not sanguine for poor Paris. The wise thing to do, or rather to have done, would seem to be to retire behind the Loire, and organize these masses, leaving Paris deserted, and more or less a burden to the Prussians ; but that, of course, every one knows was not to be done, especially by the present Government. Paris is supposed, as it always has been, to represent France, and the present Government is essentially a Paris one. It looks as if there was to be a second massacre of the innocents on their account, in the same way as MacMahon's hopeless attempt was a desperate effort to save the Empire. Julianne is very funny about two Mobiles from St. Malo, who are quartered *chez* Bitters,* and she

* Mr. F. G. Currie.



says they are *très pieux* and very dirty, and she has been obliged to provide each with a spittoon, which they carry about under their arms when in the house. They look upon themselves as doomed, and are only anxious to be properly *communisés*, and ready for their fate. Yesterday they told her they were ordered away to the forts, and took leave of her, with the request that she would write to their families if they did not come back; they also told her that they were ordered to leave their rifles behind; it had not struck them that it would be more likely that they would have to take them, when sent to face the enemy. They said *they* had passed the General (Trochu) in review, but what had struck them most were the large number of splendidly-uniformed *Generals* (the mounted National Guard), who are most fantastic-looking lancers, with purple plumes, quite à la *bal de l'opera*.

The rest of the National Guard *Sédentaire* are now receiving their muskets; all our old friends, the waiters, are amongst the number. People are already beginning to say that the worst will not be over with the war, and think a further revolution inevitable. At present the Republicans have it all their own way, but it seems more than probable that the Imperialists would still have a majority in a Constituent Assembly.

The Prussians are, I hear, close by, at Joinville, near the Vincennes race-course, and I have just seen



a whole *corps d'armée* going in that direction, down the Rue de Rivoli. One knows they have brought it on themselves, but it is impossible, living here, not to sympathize with the Frenchmen. I am so exasperated with the *Times*, which seems to exult over the Frenchmen's miseries. As for the *Daily News*, it is, at all events, consistent; but (though of course I know it is not so) it is almost impossible when one reads it *here* to believe that it is not in the pay of the Prussians, and I am not surprised the French think so. We hear Malet has got safely into the Prussian lines; of course his mission has now been forestalled. The messenger has not come in to-day from London. I suppose the line is up in some place. Early this morning, most people were woke by the blowing up of the bridge at Asnières; I, however, slept through it. After ten hours' Chancery one sleeps sound.

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

Paris, September 18, 1870,

10 P.M.

I WRITE this letter to explain what has taken place here since the departure of Lord Lyons last night, on the chance of its reaching you through the post, as I have just learnt, on inquiry at the Central Post



Office, that the authorities do not refuse to take letters, though they can only give me faint hopes of being able to transmit them.

I went early this morning to the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, having previously sent to the different stations to inquire whether any trains would leave Paris. The messenger whom I had sent to the station of the Chartres Railway, which is a long way from the Embassy, brought me back word, a little before three o'clock, that a train would, it was hoped, start at five o'clock, but that it would probably be the last, as it was reported that the Prussian cavalry had made their appearance near the station at Versailles; all the other lines of railway from Paris were cut. As Lord Lyons had desired me to send the Queen's messenger back to London to-day, if possible, I thought it better to start him off at once with what I had to send at the moment. The messenger left the Embassy at four o'clock, and the train started at five, with a pilot-engine ahead of it, to see that the way was clear. As I have heard no more of him, I conclude that he has got away safely.

Lord Lyons instructed me to leave Paris in the event of its being threatened with a bombardment, or if there is any other imminent danger, and to do my utmost to obtain a safe passage out of Paris for all British subjects. I do not anticipate that there will be any difficulty in doing so, and it will probably be easier to effect a safe retreat if the German

will go well.

HENRY

P.S.—The American, Swiss, Belg
other Ministers are still here ; also o
Secretaries, and the Russian and A
Attachés ; the rest of the Austria
Embassies are gone to Tours.

Paris, Septe

Dear Philip, 4

I HAVE just heard that the LAST
point of leaving.

Write to my mother, and say I am
that I shall come away, according to
before a bombardment takes place.

Your affectio

HENRY



DIARY.

September 20.—Went early in the morning to the Préfecture de Police to get out Dr. M. . . . Waited for an hour in the room of the Secrétaire-Général, who received a great many visitors. Conversed with the Commandant of the Garde de Paris, who told me that the former Sergents de Ville are formed into a regiment, and that a certain Madame de Sienne, a good-looking lady—*marlée, mais séparée de son mari*—has asked for a permit to allow her to fight on the ramparts in men's clothes. Dr. M. . . . at last found and released; had been in prison eight days. Visits all day; declined to find *sauf-conduits* for two persons who want to make their way out of Paris. Dr. Wyatt and Herbert arrested; rescued them from the Mairie. Mobile, who accompanied me, begins to doubt about the patriotic feeling of Paris; more British subjects and diplomats, amongst others the Nonce, who asks for news, says he does not know in whose possession Rome now is. Consoled some old ladies. Dined with Moltke; met Marquis D., who described his journey to Meudon, with a despatch for the Emperor from the Minister of War. He arrived, knowing nothing of the capitulation, and was astonished at finding numerous friends, who told him that they were prisoners: in the ante-room

Lynar and Hatzfeldt: found the Emperor smoking cigarettes, covered with decorations, abusing every one; D. thinks the Emperor meant to return to Paris. He was indignant when the Emperor told him that he had been made very comfortable by the King of Prussia.

The Prussian bivouac fires are visible from the Trocadero.

September 21.—Received the visits of several Englishmen engaged in the French service, amongst others Sir Culling Eardley; also Captain de Rohan, an ex-Garibaldian, who finds that the Nationals are better than the Mobiles, and thinks that Fort Valérien will easily be taken. The Mobiles have in most cases re-elected their old officers. Fancy drilling goes on in the Champs Elysées; *éclaireurs* conceal themselves behind the trees and *cafés chantants*; an elderly gentleman in command, in an ordinary dress, with a musket, crouching behind a tree, as if he was lying in wait for a rabbit, shouts “Eclairez à gauche,” and others emerge from the *café chantant*, and take aim at the horses on the merry-go-round.

September 22.—Five British subjects attempted to leave Paris, but were stopped at the Porte Maillot for want of a pass from General Trochu. They will



go, if possible, to-morrow. Captain de Rohan wants to leave Paris. Meeting in the Place de la Concorde; the Reds want Louis Blanc, Blanqui, and others, to be made members of the Government. They seem to be in a minority. Their meeting at the Folies Bergères was a failure, nearly all the audience crying "Vive Favre, Gambetta, et Compagnie!"

Got a pass for the five Britishers from Trochu, through d'Iresin; started them from Bignon's, where I dined. Of the people one meets, 99 out of 100 say that the defence of Paris is impossible: "Il faut mourir pour l'honneur de la France." Since the Prussians have taken the heights of Châtillon, which command the two forts, Vanves and Montrouge, they can take them easily, and thence bombard the fortifications.

Claremont thinks the complete quiet of to-day very ominous; the Prussians are not likely to go to sleep, and we shall soon hear of them.

By Balloon.

My dear Philip, *Paris, September 23.*

I WRITE a line on the chance of its reaching you, to say that we are all well, but getting rather bored. I hoped to be able to send the messenger to-morrow, but do not think now it is safe to do so; so I shall

Y our anect
HENR

DIARY.

September 23.—M. Favre's Circular with Bismarck appeared in *Journal O*.
ading on the side of Châtillon since f
ing; went to meeting of Corps Diplo
Nuncio's; decided not to send Messeng
London, as I cannot get a flag of tru
mentaire from General Trochu; news
Ville Juif; great exaggerations as to wh
place; 35,000 prisoners dwindled by
Quels blagueurs! The Emperor, who
some time called "misérable coquin," is
of as "lugubre histrion."

September 24.—Distressed Britishers
in very bad plight; marriage at the F
Britishers started



September 25.—Very quiet all day ; beautiful weather, and the garden a great resource.

September 26.—Engaged in getting *sauf-conduits* and *parlementaire* for the courier, assisted by Mr. Washburne.

By Balloon.

My dear Mother, *Paris, September 25, 1870.*

If this reaches you, you will be glad to hear that I am quite well. The position is interesting, as you may suppose, but it will become tedious if it lasts too long. Of course I can't tell you any news, as I do not know what may become of this letter. I may have some better means of communication later, and, if so, I shall trust Philip to send you the news, as I have not much time for writing letters.

Your most affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Philip, *Paris, September 26, 1870.*

You must try and excuse my shortcomings. I have been so overwhelmed with work—distressed British subjects, some nearly starving, all alarmed, many arrested, and a few married!—have taken up nearly all my time, and for some days I had hardly time to eat and sleep. Thank heavens, it has been

quieter for the last day or two, or I think I should have gone crazy. I suppose the excitement kept me going. I shall now, I suppose, get bored, as every one else is who is not fighting, shut up as we are, and knowing nothing of what is going on outside. It is a very extraordinary position to be in. I have been dying to send off the messenger for days past, but I have been afraid to do so without a flag of truce, though I don't believe there would be any real danger in getting out, but to come back would be very much more difficult, on account of the *frances tireurs* and marauders who are about between the armies. They seem to have got tired of arresting people the last few days; nobody has said a word to me, but I never speak to any one, or stand still, staring about me, and I carry about all kinds of passes and letters in case of accidents. I cannot describe the extraordinary state Paris is in. Dust and drilling are the principal features: the Champs Elysées are in an awful state. I have been too much harassed with the multitude of different things I have to do to write as I should have wished. I have found it hopeless to try and manufacture despatches from day to day, which I had no hope of being able to send. I think I shall now stick mainly to private letters, and try to send them by the balloons. Pray do what you can in the way of communicating with my mother. Send her my letter, and give her an account of me. When I am not running about to



the different offices, I am at it, writing all day, and the copying is a dreadful bore. Claremont is a resource, but he is busy on his own account, and Hore is still very ill, though getting better. I do not know what we shall do about the British subjects; there are above 300 in great distress, some starving. I have had great difficulty in getting off the messenger. I hope he will now go all right. I am so tired that I must conclude. I hope all will go well, and that it will be over soon.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

DIARY.

September 27.—Dispatched Johnson: difficulties about carriage; he was stopped at the barriers, and had to return to the Ministry of War, but ultimately got off; great fire and tremendous smoke, said to be petroleum, near Montmartre; great distress beginning to arise; butchers' shops closing.

September 28.—As a good specimen of the stories which pass current here, it is asserted that the fire the day before yesterday was a holocaust of 10,000 Prussians who had been sprinkled with petroleum in the Forêt de Bondy.

you, though heaven knows when I cannot conceive the bother I had messenger away. I only hope he is all right; the most difficult part out, and he was seen safely out on fort, where he was to find the flag and made a great bother about giving me and I hope I may not have the same hands again. By the way, it would Cornet* to hear that I have just seen l'Aigle on his way to mount guard. 'assez embêté.' There has been some days past; the storm may, I expected soon. Every one seems, however, that the Prussians would have had a better they had been quicker about it; they resistance a very different story to what have been a few days ago. Even Cornet generally is a croaker, thinks things are decidedly for the French. It depends upon anything upon the action.



semi-lunatic in custody of a dozen National Guards, and a deputation of British journalists on my hands at the same moment and in the same waiting-room. The meeting of Diplomats last week was very funny ; Mr. Washburne made a great speech, beginning, "The Nonce has con-voked the Di-plotmatic Corpse," which was most elegantly translated by his French dragoman, "Son Eminence," &c. I was very near making a neat speech myself on the spur of the moment, but I thought it was more becoming in my humble position only to deliver a few sentences. Mr. Washburne is a very jolly old fellow, and amuses me much. He told me yesterday that he had seen a spy arrested, who was dressed as an "Invalidé;" he said he was "a regular German-looking fellow—a spectacle Dutchman."

September 29.

The Prussians are intrenching themselves at St. Cloud and Versailles. I begin to fancy that a large part of their army has gone in some other direction. It is evident that the Government do not really know what is going on in the country ; they publish every now and then a scrap of news, but if they had received even one messenger from Tours, it seems to me incredible that he should not at least have brought one newspaper to enlighten us. The papers publish wonderful accounts of meetings in Hyde Park, in which *la papesse* of England was

... to vienna, in order that he i
more imagination. There are dif
arising about the sale of meat, a
butchers' shops are shut; the Gove
the price and the number of beasts
killed; at present their arrangement
and there is very little meat to be got
satisfaction. Frost,* who is, like mo
his class, accustomed, I suppose, to ha
six meat repasts a day, is getting ve
the subject. As far as I am concerne
rally at the club, and breakfast at the
and see no change. I even have my b
fresh eggs in the morning: I am afrai
they cost. As for the prices at the rest
seems no difference. I suppose they w
tant before that they remain the same
present, very different customers,
diminished profits I don't doubt. T
will never see the old golden times
Paris is fast losing her beauty, and co
either and



the second Empire. They even talk of pulling down the column in the Place Vendôme ! and they seem to take a pleasure in spoiling everything they can, on the principle, I suppose, of cutting one's nose off to spite one's face.

September 30.

I have been round the town by the Circular Railway ; the works did not strike me as being very solid. I was questioned by a National Guard who was in the carriage with me, but who, however, satisfied himself that I was an Englishman, without examining my papers. There has been fighting this morning near Ville Juif, and a good many wounded are being brought in.

October 2.

I must finish my letter rapidly, as I have just heard that I can send it through the Americans. I have just returned from Bignon's ; a capital dinner, considering the siege. Henri has been away on duty for two days ; it is thought he will return "avec moins de ventre." The Boulevards were crowded, but what a change from former days ; crowds of men and women—by the way, they say a good many of them have been to see the Prussians, and there is an order out on the subject.

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

By Balloon.

My dear Mother, *Paris, October 1, 1870.*

I WRITE you a line to send by the Government balloon ; I wonder whether it will ever reach you. This is the largest sized paper and envelope allowed ; I am very well, but getting horribly bored ; however, after all it is not quite so bad as the Hague. We have to day been shut up for a fortnight, and I need not tell you that it seems very long to us. I wonder what is going on elsewhere ; I dare say the world is going on much as usual, but we shall have a deal to learn when we get out. One has an opportunity of experiencing what it must be to be a prisoner or to make a long sea voyage ; I confess I would rather be shooting partridges. My gun case which was put ready with my other luggage when I was to have started with the others, has been staring me in the face in bitter mockery outside my door ever since till to-day, when I have had it removed. Every one feels unsettled and disinclined to sit down to read or do anything, and I find that the time hangs very heavy when I have no Embassy business on hand. The weather continues very fine, and if it is as hot in England it must be warm work in the turnips.

I hope my uncle is well again.

Your most affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.



This is quite a schoolboy's letter, and I have had a difficulty in filling even this small sheet; you will of course understand why I am so prosy and uninteresting. If the Prussians get hold of it, they will think me very stupid, but I hope at least they will forward my letter.

DIARY.

October 2.—General Burnside has arrived in Paris from the Prussian head-quarters.

October 3.—They are evidently going to take Paris by famine; General Burnside says the Germans are living on the fat of the land. According to news from Bougival to-day they pay for everything in money.

Ass on sale at the butchers'; in one shop is announced, "Ane nommé Bismarck, âgé de 3 ans."

Dear Philip,

Paris, October 4, 1870.

PLEASE arrange my newspaper extracts *convenablement*. They are interesting, particularly the one signed Rouher; no news, we are getting very disconsolate; I send these things by Prince Wittgenstein,

D

Russian Military Attaché, who goes to-morrow, and says he means to return.

Frost finds the horse very sweet; ass is now a delicacy.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

DIARY.

October 5.—Prince Wittgenstein, Russian Military Attaché, made an attempt to get out by Creteil, but took the wrong road, and was not allowed by the Prussians to pass; he saw a reconnaissance made.

M. Alfonso tried to get out also for the third time; he ran risk in returning from the Mobiles, who were shooting at hares.

October 6.—Another meeting of the Corps Diplomatique, they issued a mild note to Count Bismarck declining to send their despatches open.

The Prussians go on intrenching themselves and the forts firing at them, I expect to little purpose.

Wittgenstein started, went by Sévres, some difficulty in getting across; firing from the forts.

October 7.—*Rassemblements* demanding the Commune; Madame de V's. leg of mutton seized by a National Guard, on its way from the butcher. Two British doctresses want to get away.



October 8.—Further meetings and demonstrations by the Reds. Mr. Worth says he is going to start in a balloon; he has paid 5,000 francs. I don't believe that Europe is admiring Paris. We shall not come out as heroes, but as the victims of a dreadful boredom. A report that Lord Lyons is gone to England. Gambetta started yesterday in a balloon. Regulations for sale of horse flesh in *Journal Officiel*.

My dear Philip, *Paris, October 8, 1870.*

I SEND this by the Minister of Columbia in an open letter to Colonel Walker. I do not write to Lord Lyons, as I do not know where he may be at this moment; if in England please let him know that we are all right and have written many letters to him, some of which I hope have reached him.

With *bien des choses* to every one,

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Philip, *Paris, October 9, 1870.*

I RECEIVED a letter to day from Russell of the *Times* from Versailles, which was brought in by General Burnside; I interviewed the General this afternoon at Washburne's house. As you may suppose,

his second visit and the receipt of a letter are quite events for us. By the way, I asked Russell in my answer to his letter, which goes back by the General to-morrow, to try and open communication for me with you; he might have an opportunity, I should think, of sending me an open letter at least, or a newspaper; write him a line, they must have some way of getting letters from England, as they have, I know, the newspapers; but Burnside unfortunately forgot to bring over one (the *Standard* of the 3rd) as he had intended. I see no prospect of the siege coming to an end for at least a month. The Prussians evidently don't mean to attack, and though it is very likely there may be more serious rows here and even bloodshed they will be put down, and at present the agitators are quite in a minority. The same system as at Metz is apparently going to be pursued by the Prussians, but unless internal dissensions make it impossible, which I do not expect, Paris will hold out to the last extremity. Perhaps the terms eventually proposed may not be so unfavourable as was made out in M. Favre's circular, but I don't think this Government would agree to any loss of territory; it will probably end in a great sortie, you will be able to guess with what result. My opinion of the Parisians I have already often told you, and I have no reason to modify it; the weather has changed, and it has been raining for the last two days; it must be unpleasant on the ramparts. The ballooners are very



active: I have written to my mother several times
par ballon monté, I wonder whether she gets any of
my letters.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

As I write I hear them pounding away from Mont
Valérien, and the noise is tremendous.

My dear Philip, *Paris, October 11, 1870.*

I MUST write you a line if it is only to tell you
that Henri is growing a moustache; I have just dined
there, an excellent quail, and the Margaux is better
than ever. If the Prussians read this it will make
their mouths water; I wonder what they will think
of Julianne's correspondence, which I forward also to
morrow by Hore—he goes to Tours. I have forgotten
to tell you that I have had a letter from Cora Pearl's
neighbours, protesting against her hoisting the British
flag. There is a story that one of the Ministers went
to the Tuileries, and on his giving some instructions,
he was told he must speak to the Commandant; the
Minister accordingly sent for this functionary, who
had been regularly installed since the 4th of Septem-
ber, and asked him how he got there, and who
had appointed him. "Parbleu," the Commandant
answered, "I appointed myself as you have done."

I hope you will have got the letters I sent on the 8th.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Philip, *Paris, October 13, 1870.*

WE are very low; Colonel Loyd Lindsay has arrived from England, and did not even bring in a newspaper, and very little news of any kind; we seem to be buried alive and forgotten. I send a private letter to Lord Granville, but as we hear that Count Bismarck has notified to the Government that Paris is invested, and all communication must cease, I suppose it is no use trying to correspond any longer. We begin to think that even the dispatches sent by Johnson did not reach London, as a report to Lord Ducie on the subject of the International Ambulances from Wyatt which was in the bag, appears to have never reached its destination, and Lindsay knew nothing about it. I am getting more anxious about the British subjects; many clamour to get out, but it is impossible to do anything for them, except I were to address a note on the subject to Count Bismarck, which I should not do except in the *greatest* extremity, as I conclude the Government would take some steps in that direction if they wished an appeal to be made



to the Prussians on their behalf. The more important question, then, is to feed these unhappy people. The British Fund has provisions and money for a certain time, but one day these will come to an end, and whatever we do must be done at once, or there will be no more provisions to be had. I have made up my mind to assist them when their money is gone, and to take my chance of getting it back if I can ; I have no doubt it will be all right, besides we have got some rich people here who will I dare say help us ; of course the Fund do not know whether there have been more subscriptions in England since the beginning of the siege ; they had about 600*l.* in hand, but you will see by the inclosed, that their prospects are not promising if the siege really lasts months, as is quite possible as far as we know.

Pray let all this about the Fund be known if you can ; I have written about it, and others the same, to people who it is thought will assist. I believe the Government did something, but it was before I returned, and I have got no archives, and so don't know whether they authorized any further sum than what Lord Lyons gave to the Fund. I am afraid this is not a very lively letter, and rather illegible and incoherent, but I have been a good deal worried and pressed for time to day, so you must make the best of it. There is an idea that the Prussians are after all going to summon the town, upon what authority, or why it is spread about, I have not the remotest

notion. But anything is possible in our present state of ignorance.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

DIARY.

October 15.—Colonel Loyd Lindsay returned to Versailles. M. Flavigny not allowed to accompany him.

Newspapers at the American Legation sent by Burnside.

Résumé published in the *Vérité*, which attacks the Government for not publishing news.

October 20 (Evening).—Letter received from Count Bismarck, conveying instructions from Lord Granville to leave Paris with the British subjects.

October 21.—Received a pigeon despatch from Lord Lyons instructing me to leave.

Note to M. Favre delivered at noon.

Dear Mother, *Paris, October 21, 1870.*

THERE is a balloon, I hear, which has been waiting for a favourable wind for several days, so I write a line on the chance of a breeze from the right quarter



to-morrow. We remain in our usual state of boredom, mixed with occasional bothers, but fortunately, hitherto, of no great consequence. The siege may last till doomsday, and I should come out as grey as the prisoner of Chillon, and perhaps not in as good condition; but I hope and think there is a chance of my making a bolt of it one of these days. In the meantime, you will be glad to hear that I am in good feather. I wonder how you all are getting on. Colonel Lindsay brought a few papers for the American Legation, but there was not much news in them.

Your most affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

DIARY.

October 22.—Note from M. Favre refusing permission. Asked for interview with his Excellency.

October 24.—Interview with M. Favre at 5 P.M. Permission accorded.

October 25.—Note to Count Bismarck forwarded in the morning.

October 26 (11 P.M.).—Received answer from Count Bismarck.

October 27.—False start by Porte de Charenton at 7 A.M. : letter from Count Bismarck received in the night having stopped departure of British subjects.

Extract from *La Vérité* :—

“Ce matin, vers neuf heures, une longue file de voitures sortait par la Porte de Charenton. Ces voitures offraient un singulier spectacle ; les voitures de louage, les voitures de maître, surchargées de malles et de bagages, les chevaux de prix, les haquenées maigres et efflanquées se pressaient pêle-mêle.

“Les trotteurs noirs du Duc de Leuchtenberg, neveu de l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, piaffaient à côté d'un fiacre. Quelques Anglais à cheval couraient çà et là sur la route de Charenton, au grand scandale des Gardes Nationaux, qui les interrogeaient de temps à autre d'un air farouche.

“Tout ce remue-ménage était causé par le départ des neutres quittant la capitale. Cinquante Américains, vingt Russes s'éloignaient ainsi de nos murs.

“Après avoir franchi la Porte de Charenton, les voitures s'engagèrent sur la route de Créteil. On fut obligé de faire un détour à la hauteur de ce village, dont la grande rue, défendue par une formidable barricade, est impraticable, même pour les piétons. Créteil, à ce moment, n'était occupé par aucun poste Français.

“Le convoi, continuant sa marche, ne tarda pas à



rencontrer les avant-postes des Prussiens, lesquels nous ont paru assez fortement retranchés à Mesly et à Montmesly. Il fit halte à quelques centaines de mètres en avant de Bonneuil.

“ Le Colonel Hoffmann, Premier Secrétaire de la Légation des Etats-Unis, se trouvait là avec le Comte de Hatzfeldt, Officier Général de l'Armée Prussienne et conseiller intime du Comte de Bismarck.

“ Il fut aussitôt procédé à la vérification des laissez-passer délivrés par le Ministre des Etats-Unis. Cette opération, conduite avec un soin minutieux, dura plus d'une heure et demie.

“ Les voyageurs eurent alors la liberté de poursuivre leur route du côté que bon leur semblerait.

“ Mais la majeure partie se dirigea vers Versailles, espérant là obtenir des renseignements sur les moyens les plus rapides de se rendre dans leurs pays ou au centre de la France.

“ De Paris à Bonneuil le paysage offre un aspect désolé; peu de maisons sont détruites, mais de notre côté elles sont toutes désertes, crénelées, barricadées.

“ Au delà des avant-postes Prussiens, les habitations qui ont été abandonnées par leurs propriétaires ont été saccagées, les autres sont scrupuleusement respectées, et ne courent d'autre risque que d'être atteintes par les boulets au jour de la bataille.

“ De ce côté, les champs n'ont été jusqu'ici l'objet d'aucune dévastation, ils sont encore couverts

de légumes ; les choux et les tomates y sont en abondance.

“ A notre retour, nous avons trouvé Creteil occupé par des soldats de la mobile.

“ En même temps que les Russes et les Américains, un certain nombre d'Anglais devaient quitter Paris, parmi lesquels M. Wodehouse, Premier Secrétaire, le Colonel Claremont et M. Hore, Attaché Militaire. M. de Bismarck avait donné l'ordre qu'il fût dressé une liste exacte de tous les Anglais qui sollicitaient l'autorisation de quitter Paris.

“ Cette liste ne lui ayant pas, paraît-il, été communiquée à temps, ou n'ayant pas été faite selon les indications données, les Anglais furent obligés de rebrousser chemin et de remettre leur voyage à un autre jour.

“ Une nouvelle liste a été expédiée cette semaine et leur départ aura lieu, selon toute probabilité, au commencement de la semaine prochaine.”

October 28.—Second permission accorded by French Government.

October 30 (Sunday).—Walked in the Bois from Porte Maillot to Porte Dauphine. Letter arrived from Count Bismarck granting permission for first list of British subjects to cross the German lines. M. Thiers arrived from Versailles with the terms of armistice proposed by the Great Powers.



October 31.—M. Thiers returned to Versailles. "Journée du 31 Octobre." There have been constant applications during the week from British subjects, and it has been impossible to make out a complete list of them.

The following extract from the "Diary of a Besieged Resident" gives some idea of the scenes which daily occurred at the Embassy:—

"When I went upstairs I found Wodehouse sitting like patience on a stool, with a number of Britons round him, who wanted to get off out of Paris. Wodehouse very justly told them that Lord Lyons had given them due notice to leave, and that they had chosen at their own risk to remain. The Britons seemed to imagine that their Embassy was bound to find them a road by which they might safely withdraw from the town. One very important Briton was most indignant—'I am a man of wealth and position. I am not accustomed to be treated in this manner. What is the use of you, Sir, if you cannot insure my safe passage to England? If I am killed the world shall ring with it. I shall myself make a formal complaint to Lord Granville,' said this incoherent and pompous donkey. Exit man of position fuming, enter unprotected female. Of course she was a widow; of course she had lost half-a-dozen sons; of course she kept lodgings; and, of course, she wanted her 'Hambassador' generally to take her

under his wing. I left Wodehouse explaining to her that if she went out of Paris even with a pass, she might or might not be shot according to circumstances. I will say for him that I should not be as patient as he is, were I worried and badgered by the hour by a crowd of shrieking women and silly men."

Par Ballon Monté.

Dear Philip,

Paris, November 1, 1873.

ONE line to re-assure my friends and relatives. We have not yet been able to set off, but we have the permission all right. Last night we were on the eve of a revolution, but it has been put down, and I am sanguine that at last these people will listen to reason. I have been nearly killed with the work and annoyance that I have gone through, but am now quite well again and in good spirits.

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

November 2.

Nothing new to-day. There is to be a vote to-morrow, "Oui ou Non," whether the electors of Paris will maintain the Government, and on Saturday the municipal elections. People are getting rational, I hope, and there is a faint prospect of an armistice, and if there is an armistice I imagine there will be peace. We have still lots to eat, but there



must be an end to all this. I expect the National Guard are beginning to find it very cold on the ramparts at night. I am sorry to see that my poor uncle Rebow is dead. We have received some newspapers from Versailles.

DIARY.

November 8.—Letters received from Lord Lyons. Permission to leave granted for Tuesday.

The following letter from the Honourable Alan Herbert, shows the steps taken by Mr. Wodehouse before he left Paris to assist the British Charitable Fund:—

2, *Rue Chauveau*,
Paris, 30 *September*, 1870.

My dear Wodehouse,

I AM very grateful for the measures you have taken on behalf of the British Charitable Fund in Paris. The sum of 500*l.* which you have left for us in Messrs. Rothschild's hands, to be drawn at my discretion for the Society, is a great boon to us. I am the more grateful to you that I am aware you have placed this sum at our disposal without any

direct authority from home for so doing,—so that, if disavowed, the responsibility would lie entirely with you.

For my own part, I engage not to make use of the 500*l.* or any part of it till our other sources are exhausted, and then only on behalf of the poor English residing in Paris, to be distributed to them by the Committee of the British Charitable Fund.

With many thanks,

I have, &c.

A. HERBERT.

Official Report by Mr. Wodehouse of his journey from Paris to Versailles :—

The Governor of Paris fixed Tuesday, the 8th instant, as the day for our departure, and, on the morning of that day at 7 A.M., nearly seventy British subjects, more than half of them on foot, and about as many more Swiss, Austrian, Russian, and American subjects left Paris by the Porte de Charenton. After a long delay at the Prussian outposts at Creteil, where our lists and passports were minutely verified and examined, we proceeded on our road under a cavalry escort until within a short distance of Brie Comte Robert, and entered that town at nightfall.

Great difficulty was experienced in finding lodgings for the night, and hardly any food was to be



procured in this unfortunate town, which has been laid almost bare by the constant passage of troops since the commencement of the siege.

The next morning I succeeded, with some difficulty, in procuring three peasant carts, in which and in our carriage twenty British subjects, besides the persons belonging to the Embassy, were conveyed to Corbeil, and on the following day, Thursday, the 10th instant, to Versailles.

On my arrival I addressed a note to Count Bismarck, transmitting to his Excellency a second list of British subjects who are desirous of leaving Paris, and asking that the persons named in it might be allowed also to pass the Prussian lines. I requested that the answer, if favourable, might be communicated to Colonel Claremont, who has remained for the present in Paris: and I have since learnt that they will be allowed to pass,* but that this is the last time that permission will be granted by the Prussian military authorities.

* This information was conveyed in the following note from Baron Hatzfeldt, the head of Count Bismarck's Chancellerie:—

“ Cher ami,

“ Votre liste a heureusement passé ! Le Ministre me charge même de vous dire, si vous aviez omis quelqu'un, de me le nommer *sans retard*, attendu que c'est la *dernière* occasion d'obtenir la permission de sortir.

“ Vous avez le tems jusqu'à demain matin 10 heures, mais pas plus tard.

“Mille amitiés,

“V. HATZFELDT.”

E

Colonel Walker having placed at my disposal 1,000 francs for the assistance of the destitute British subjects, Captain Hozier and myself made arrangements for forwarding them to England *via* Havre; and they started on their journey on the 13th instant.

I left Versailles on the 14th *via* St. Germain, Nantes, Vernon, and Gaillon, from which latter place I reached Rouen by railway yesterday morning.

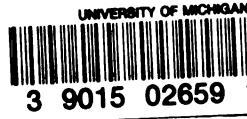
I intend to start this evening for Havre, and proceed thence to-morrow night by the steamboat to England.

The following extracts from the letters of the *Times* correspondent at Versailles give an account of the arrival of Mr. Wodehouse and his convoy:—

Head-Quarters, Third Army,

November 11, 1870.

Last night Mr. Wodehouse arrived here from Paris, after a most tedious journey of three days, by way of Brie Comte Robert, Corbeil, &c., bringing with him 120 or more British subjects. The story of their exodus is interesting: the difficulties attendant on it were very considerable, and Mr. Washburne, the American Minister, who is accredited to the Government at Paris, did much to assist Mr. Wodehouse in overcoming them in Paris. Colonel Claremont's personal influence with General Trochu was also most



useful. The preparation of the list of names, the organization of all the preliminaries, were not the least troublesome part of the business, and Mr. Wodehouse had to act on his own responsibility in contracting debts and procuring money for the necessary expenses. The persons who wished to come out, most of whom ought to have left long ago, had to promise they would not take out papers or letters. The list of names was sent into the Bund Kanzlei here, and first approved by Count Bismarck, who required an assurance that each individual was informed of the conditions, and when they came out this list was compared with that sent to the outposts for the reception of the emigrants. More of this hereafter, and of the dreary journey round the Prussian lines.—From the *Times*, November 16, 1870.

November 14, 1870.

The English emigrants, some of whom looked as if they were interested in "Scott's lot," were sent off from Versailles to-day. At 8 o'clock I sent off my trusted courier to St. Germain, to arrange for their departure from that place on the way to Havre. An omnibus was hired at Versailles for their conveyance to St. Germain, and they left at 10:30 for that place, where the courier had with great difficulty procured vehicles for their journey. Mr. Wodehouse and Captain Hozier started them from Versailles, and the courier was furnished by the former with money to

pay the expenses of those who were too poor to provide for their own conveyance to England.—From the *Times*, November 18, 1870.

London, November 19, 1870.

My dear Mother,

I ARRIVED safe last night. I embarked at Havre on Tuesday night, but we got into a fog and had a collision, and only reached Southampton in the evening.

I am very well in health. I shall have to stay in London some days at least, as I have much to do.

Your most affectionate

H. W.

Tours, November 21, 1870.

My dear Wodehouse,—

I CANNOT tell you how great a relief it was to me to hear, first by your telegram and then by your letter from Rouen, that you were safe out of Paris, and delivered from all your troubles.

* * * * *

I think you managed it all very well.

Most truly yours,

LYONS.



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Foreign Office,

December 7, 1870.

Sir,

I AM directed by Earl Granville to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of the 30th ultimo, inclosing copies of your correspondence with Lord Lyons, M. Jules Favre, and Count Bismarck respecting the arrangements made for the departure of British subjects from Paris.

I am now to convey to you Lord Granville's approval of the steps which you have taken with a view to give effect to the arrangement sanctioned by the French and Prussian authorities for the above object, as well as to provide for the journey to this country of such British subjects as were in destitute circumstances.

I am, &c.

E. HAMMOND.

The Honourable Henry Wodehouse.

On the 28th of January Paris surrendered, and an armistice for twenty-one days was signed by Count Bismarck and M. Jules Favre.

Mr. Wodehouse received instructions to return to Paris, and left London on the 10th of February.

Foreign Office,

Sir,

January 31, 1871.

I AM directed by Earl Granville to state to you that his Lordship considers it desirable that you should at once proceed to Paris; and I am accordingly to request that you will make arrangements for doing so with the least possible delay.

Before leaving you will call at this office for instructions.

I am, &c.

E. HAMMOND.

The Honourable Henry Wodehouse.

Foreign Office,

Sir,

February 9, 1871.

I AM directed by Earl Granville to instruct you to make arrangements for proceeding to Paris to-morrow night.



You will have the goodness, as already directed, to call at this office for instructions before leaving.

I am, &c.

E. HAMMOND.

The Honourable Henry Wodehouse.

Dear Philip,

Paris, February 12, 1871.

I ARRIVED last night at 10.30. I found Prince Wittgenstein at Charing Cross, and we came on together. We had a very bad passage, and on arriving at Calais found there would be a train at 7 A.M., so we started at that hour and got as far as Amiens. Here we found the Prussians, and got into a regular German train—carriages, conductors, and everything pure German from the Cologne line. Wittgenstein had a letter of recommendation from Bernstorff, and the Prussians were tremendously civil. We left this train, which goes to Gonesse, at Creil, and found a French train which brought us to Pontoise; here the bridge was broken down, and we had to go over a bridge of boats on foot. The luggage was carried, and how we got everything safely across in the dark was a marvel. On the other side we found another train and so got on to Paris. Wittgenstein was very energetic, and I don't think alone I should have got through; there are no

regular trains, and you get on how you can. As regards the Germans everything is perfectly in order, but with the French it is all bewilderment and scrimmage. The only way was to watch for a train, and then find out from the conductor where it was going to, and get in accordingly, if there seemed a probability of its taking one in the direction of Paris. No tickets taken or asked for, and my passport was never looked at after Calais. There were, of course, no carriages at the station, so we had to leave the luggage and start off and walk. It was a curious entry. The night was bitterly cold—but there were crowds of people in the streets—but no carriages and very little light. The cafés in the Boulevards were open, and the women sitting in them as usual. We stopped at Peter's, and had supper in a cabinet. The place was crowded, youths in uniform, women dancing and singing and kicking up an awful row, rather a sorry spectacle under the circumstances. There seems to be plenty of food in the town, at all events for the rich. I found a bed at the Vouillemont. To-day I have driven to the convent where Lord Lyons' niece is, and talked to her through the *grille*. Five shells fell in the convent, but fortunately nobody was hurt. This quarter near the Panthéon was the one most injured, but though I looked hard I could not see anything of the damage, which cannot be great. I dined at Bignon's, with Blount, Russell of the *Times*, and Oliphant; the dinner was dear, but



nearly as good as usual. Rich people seem to have got on very well, but the other classes suffered a good deal from the scarcity of food. I expect that the bad bread hastened the capitulation much more than the Prussian shells. They say about 500 people were injured, but not much effect was produced on so large a population. The provisioning is going on all right now, I believe, but the distress must be very great, and the number of beggars about is appalling. The Ultras are frantic with the Government, and still talk of fighting, but that is all gammon. It is true the Reds have carried the elections, but I doubt if they will fight any one, even amongst themselves, if things are tolerably managed. I expect they have no spirit now for anything. In the north the elections are all in favour of the Orleanists; and here it is thought pretty generally, I believe, by reasonable people, that an Orleanist restoration is the most probable result, perhaps with a Regency at first under the Duc d'Aumale, as it was in Spain, but I do not of course know at all what is the state of affairs in other parts of France, or how far the opinions expressed here may be correct, as the public is still very much in the dark here, few letters being allowed to come in by post and no newspapers.

The ruin in France must be something awful. The Prussians have been most careful and thorough in their system of pillage. I have heard of one case in which they took away the insides of the clocks in a

country house, leaving the heavy cases. If one wants to buy old things, one will have to go to Berlin to find them.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Philip, *Paris, February 19, 1871.*

I HAVE sent the letter, and inclose what I suppose is the answer. I am much relieved by West's* arrival, and things are going on smoothly. I have been to-day in the Bois to see the state of things; the devastation at St. Cloud is awful, and there is a good deal worth seeing about the Point du Jour, the quarter nearest to the batteries at Sèvres. I went along the river opposite St. Cloud and Sèvres; it is very interesting. I hope to be able to go to Versailles to-morrow, and look up the Russell family, Odo and the Doctor. You had better come over, and see the Prussians march in, unless you are afraid of being potted in the streets, but I expect the Parisians are too much funk'd to kick up a row.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

P.S.—Tell M—— I have sent a commissionnaire with the letter he sent me for some place in the country.

* Hon. Lionel West, then Secretary of Embassy at Paris.



My dear Philip, *Paris, February 22, 1871.*

I WENT to Versailles on Sunday, and stayed with the Doctor,* who entertained a select party in the evening to dinner. He drove me down to St. Cloud in the afternoon; the greater part of the town is a most picturesque ruin. There seems to be no doubt that the Prussians are coming in, report says on Sunday, and that they will pass by the Champs Elysées and Rue de Rivoli, and stay in the town forty-eight hours. It will be touch and go, but I have backed my opinion that there will not be a row. No doubt one madman may bring it on, and every one is talking of what is in store for the Prussians, but the Parisian talk I have no belief in whatever now, and it rather inclines me the other way. Still it will be a very bad time for the respectable inhabitants, as no doubt the Prussians will be only too glad of a pretext for pillage, and so will the patriots of Belleville. On Monday I dined with the provision distributors, Moore, Wortley, Herbert, Oliphant, and others, and on my way home I passed one of the Mairies, where the distribution takes place, near the Bourse. There was an immense crowd of women waiting in a *queue*; some had been there already forty hours! It was a curious sight, there must have been several thousands of them. The

* Dr. Russell, Correspondent of the "Times" at the Prussian head-quarters.

distribution commenced at daybreak, but I understand that is now to go on all through the night.

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

Dear Philip,

Paris, February 24, 1871.

WE are still in the dark as to what is going on, and I don't think anything is settled.

Washburne has just been here ; he says the French ought to have divided their forces into seven parts, hammered away every night somehow and somewhere, and thus have worn out the Prussians. Trochu was not man enough for the situation ; if he had been, he would have been Emperor I suppose by this time. The state of things into which the United States have again subsided quietly after their war would evidently never be possible here. Did you hear that Bismarck had described Paris as "*une maison de fous habité par des singes ?*" Paris is beginning, however, to be habitable again, and in a few days we shall, no doubt, have gas. If you intend coming it is a pity you don't do so before it entirely loses its present appearance. In all probability it would now not be possible to get here before the Prussians. Some people think we shall get up in the morning and find them walking about the streets ;



it would be a very good idea. There is a good story about a man who went to see his villa near Paris, and finding the doors and windows gone, came back and returned with new ones made in Paris. His astonishment was great at finding doors and windows already there. It appeared that the General had moved his quarters there, and had had the house fitted up with doors and windows selected from the houses in the neighbouring village. This is, I believe, founded on fact. Another person found everything in perfect order in his house, even the piano in good tune; he expressed his surprise to the officer installed there. "Yes," said the latter, "I have taken the greatest care of the instrument, as it was such a good one. I fear, however, that it may suffer by the journey." "What journey?" "The journey to Berlin; we are going to have the things packed to-morrow." I send over my watch, which has stopped; please send it to Jump's to be set right, and forward it back to me when there is an opportunity. I have papers sent to Thomsett now, and he forwards them daily. I shall, therefore, not have any sent to the Foreign Office, except a weekly one.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

P.S.—I am now living in the big house; if you come you could have my room near the Chancery.

Tuesday night.

We are on the tip-toe of expectation. The Prussians are announced to come in at 10 o'clock, so I am going to bed in order to be in time to receive them. It is impossible to say how it will go off, but I incline to the opinion that there will be no row.

My dear Philip,

Paris, March 1, 1871.

THE Prussians have come in. It was supposed they would enter at 10 A.M., and I got up early to see them, but before I had left my room the news came that they had arrived, and on looking out of one of the front windows of the Embassy, there they were in front of the Exhibition building in the Champs Elysées; so I walked out and saw them as they had just arrived, at about half-past nine. First were a few hussars, then a battalion of Prussians, then some more small detachments of cavalry and infantry. They were very quiet and orderly. I walked up to the Avenue de la Grande Armée to Corbett's house, where I found Oliphant and others, who had seen them arrive from Neuilly, as you will duly have read in the *Times*. There were not many people about, but on the way back a lot of *gamins* and *canaille* had collected and were hunting some unfortunate women who were said to have been speaking to the Prussians, and doing more damage in



the gardens and places about the Alcazar, a disgusting spectacle from which I was glad to escape into the Embassy garden. On the other side of the house, in the Faubourg St. Honoré, I found strong bodies of French troops drawn up and the end of the Rue Royale barricaded. I breakfasted at Voisin's, where the shutters were closed, as in almost all other houses and shops. A good many people were walking about in the streets, but there was little talking and an air of quiet sadness which is very depressing. The rest of the German troops, said to be 30,000 in number, came in about two o'clock, after being reviewed at Longchamps by the Emperor, and marched down the Champs Elysées, bands playing and colours flying. The larger number seemed to be Bavarians. The process of billeting soon commenced; the nearest point to the Embassy where they are quartered is the Rue de l'Elysée. The mob is down on any one seen speaking to the Germans, and several people have been roughly treated, amongst others Mr. Forbes, of the *Daily News*, who was taken to the Mairie, whence I got him released. Russell, of the *Times*, rode into the Embassy at one o'clock *en route* for the station, where he has got a special train waiting to take him to England; he will put together on the road the reports made this morning by the numerous *Times* correspondents, so that they may appear in print to-morrow. It has been a very exciting day, and one has really felt as if sitting on a volcano, and

I still feel rather nervous as to what may happen in the night. There is a report that the preliminaries have been ratified at Bordeaux, and that orders to sign will immediately be received by Jules Favre. I hope so, for I shall not be sorry to see the end of the present state of things, which is, to say the least of it, uncomfortable.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

Dear Philip,

March 3, 1871.

THE Germans went out again early this morning. I had had quite enough of them. Yesterday they were as thick as fleas all over the Champs Elysées quarter. It was a curious sight enough, but monotonous. A band played in the afternoon in front of the Exhibition building. There were a good many French walking about, and they were beginning, I fancy, to think it rather amusing than otherwise. I went into the Champs Elysées again after dinner at about half-past ten in the evening and found the streets almost deserted, a few sentries, a picket or two snoring on the grass plots, no light and no sound; the night was very dark, and altogether it was extremely miserable.

There will probably be some rows to-day, indeed I

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have heard that they have begun already, but the authorities will, I expect, easily put them down.

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

Paris, Sunday Evening,

March 12, 1871.

My dear Philip,

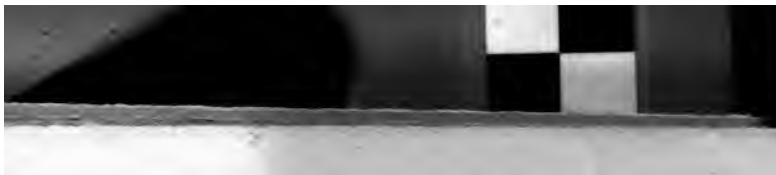
LORD LYONS will be here on Tuesday morning. I hear an arrangement has been come to with the rioters of Montmartre. I think they will give up their cannon to-morrow.

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

Lord Lyons returned to Paris on the 14th of March.

On the 13th an unsuccessful attempt was made to seize the cannon held by the National Guard at Montmartre, and in the evening of the same day the troops were withdrawn from Paris, and M. Thiers, with the other members of the Government, retired to Versailles. Lord Lyons was instructed to follow them, and Mr. Wodehouse accompanied him to Versailles, where he remained until the fall of the Commune.



My dear Philip, *Versailles, April 2, 1871.*

I WENT again into town on Thursday, and dined with Bitters. I was much disappointed with the barricades, which are wretched things. I expected to see them up to the first-floor windows. On my way back at night by train, I was questioned and examined by the Insurgents, who were, however, civil, when they saw my passport, and wished me a *bon voyage*.

This was the last train which left by the Rue Droite; next day the trains ceased by this line, and a *laissez-passer* has been required to come out by road. The trains by the Rive Gauche have continued running. It is not so very unpleasant here; there is plenty of society, a club, and the rides and drives are pleasant. Our lodging is very bad, but we feed well, having got fortunately a kitchen and *chef*. It must be much worse being in Paris, which seems to be quite deserted.

April 4.

At last the event has come off. It is a relief after the state of suspense which we have been in for the last ten days. Every one was very despondent here, thinking that the troops would not fight, in spite of the confidence expressed all the time by M. Thiers, who has been very reticent as to his plans of action. The affair at Courbevoie on the 2nd was a small one,



but it showed that the troops were disposed to act. I saw the prisoners brought in late in the day, and a more villainous-looking lot I cannot imagine.

Yesterday, as soon as it was known that the Insurgents were making their grand sortie, I started off on horseback for Marly, but unfortunately the fighting on that side was over before I got there. It was curious to see the French troops occupying the former Prussian positions. I went thence to Montretout, and from the redoubt could see the artillery fire upon Châtillon, Issy, and other forts occupied by the Insurgents.

The engagement at Meudon was of course over, and it was too late to get near enough to see anything, so I returned to Versailles. It was unfortunate that I did not go that way in the morning, as I should really have seen a fight.

It seems to have been rather severe at Meudon.

What an extraordinary thing it is that these people will fight their own countrymen but not the Prussians! Fighting is expected to go on to-day near Châtillon, which is still in the hands of the Insurgents. I think the Government have now got the game in their hands, but it will be a difficult matter to disarm the National Guard when inside Paris.

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.



My dear Philip,

Versailles, April 15, 1871.

THE cannonading goes on briskly, and more destruction is being perpetrated than was effected by the Germans. I forget whether I told you that I rode to Châtillon directly after the sortie. I did not actually see the action, but I saw a good deal of the operations—the reserves being brought up, the prisoners brought in, the bodies of Duval and others who had just been shot. I was near enough to see what a bursting shell was like, to say nothing of several which whizzed over my head. Next day I went to Meudon, where I had the same experience of shells, and could see the artillery firing and something of the skirmishing below in the woods. I also went to Courbevoie, and saw the fighting at Neuilly. Of course, I only had a somewhat distant view, but as it was all new to me, it was interesting enough. Without going quite under fire, I see clearly that it is impossible to really witness a fight, and now that the firing is more extended, it is difficult to see anything without running considerable risk, so I suppose my military experiences are over. All the world is here, but there is nothing in the way of amusement, except rides and drives in the environs, which begin to pall, though the weather is fortunately delicious, and the country very green and pretty. I begin to know the whole neighbourhood by heart. There are troops enough here in all conscience, but Thiers is



waiting for more; he wishes to have 140,000 men. The British tourist has been here, of course, represented by Anson, Brackenbury, Colonel Baker, Campbell of Islay, and others. There are also some American citizens, and it might be sociable, but as no one has more than a whole bed-room, society is rather difficult to organize. Lord Lyons has been to Paris to-day, partly, I suppose, on account of his niece. Did you see the paragraph in the *Mot d'Ordre* insinuating that the *vieux scélérat* had got a harem of nuns at the Embassy? By the way, the Turkish Embassy has been tremendously shelled; the Military Attaché, who thinks it his duty to go on living there, is in terror of his life. I hope your father got his note.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

Dear Philip, *Versailles, April 13, 1871.*

FOR the third or fourth time since we have been here Thiers announces that he is going to begin operations in a week. In the meantime he and the Insurgents together are battering down Paris and slaughtering the inhabitants at their leisure. Supplies are also to be cut off as much as possible, so they are also to be starved slowly to death—a pleasant

prospect. I am sorry for Bitters, and I almost think he would do well to cut it, but he will probably not have any difficulty in getting away later if he wishes.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Philip, *Versailles, April 27, 1871.*

THEY say to-day that Issy is silenced. I shall go to-morrow and see for myself. If so, the fire must have been much better than yesterday, and our chance of getting back to Paris is not so remote as I thought it. Still the job, I fear, will be a long and heavy one, and I have little confidence in "le petit exécutif," as Rochefort calls him. The weather has been pleasant, and the gardens are in great beauty.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Philip, *Versailles, April 29, 1871.*

THIS wretched state of things goes on without much change; the batteries opened on the forts three days ago, and the fashionable world goes in the



afternoon to Montretout to see the practice. By all accounts the insurgents have had hitherto rather the best of it; their pieces are heavier and their aim straighter, and the battery at Breteuil, in the park of St. Cloud, appears to have been silenced. The military are very despondent and they talk of having to make regular approaches, so that the end is far off, unless the Government can succeed in bribing the insurgents, or a successful assault is made, which is not at all likely. From the first the Government has made an awful mess of it, and the mismanagement will probably continue. Attention is now fixed on the municipal elections to take place on Sunday; how they will go on is quite uncertain, and it seems to me that a general civil war all over France is quite on the cards; and I cannot believe that the present situation can last much longer without further complications and disorders taking place. The Commune seems to be losing its authority, and the mob is beginning to run a muck: they talk of destroying some of the rich quarters, and some churches and monuments. A heavy fine is also to be levied on the railway companies. Meanwhile, frightful havoc is caused by the bombardment. Neuilly is nearly in as bad a state as St. Cloud. Provisions are getting scarce in Paris, and as the roughs will, of course, seize what they want themselves, the other inhabitants are in a fair way to be starved. The investment is now reported to be complete; if it was to be effected, it is



a mystery to me why it was not begun long ago, at all events by cutting the railways. There was an effective speech by M. Thiers, and an exciting debate in the Assembly yesterday, which is amusingly described by the *Gaulois*. It depicts the members of the left gesticulating, rushing to the tribune and being held back by their friends in a most amusing manner. The scene on these occasions is most absurd; it is like Bedlam let loose. I wonder if it is true that Bismarck has interceded with the Commune for the Archbishop of Paris at the request of Dr. Manning. Certain priests came here to interest the Embassies in his favour. They had left Paris *en bourgeois*, and these dignitaries of the Church, *chanoines, vicaires*, &c., dressed in very vulgar, dirty clothes, and with their beards half grown, looked like very low billiard markers. The "little executive" still goes on playing the general, to the disgust of the military: he goes to the trenches, reviews regiments, and visits ambulances. I suppose we shall read it all in a history of twenty or thirty volumes one of these days. He is certainly a vigorous old man, and I conclude he will succeed in the end, and it is something to be a statesman at all, however bad a one. The French Diplomats are in a dreadful way. All the old representatives at the tolerable posts have been turned out, and their places filled by mostly unknown Monarchists. We shall live to see the day when France talks with regret of the reign of



Badinguet the Good. I see in the correspondence about Mr. W——, that that worthy speaks of me. I send you a Memorandum which will explain the matter. Will you keep it, and produce it if requisite? The Prussians seem to have treated him with their usual brutality, but they were more or less *dans leur droit*.

Your affectionate,
HENRY WODEHOUSE.

MEMORANDUM.

Versailles, April 29, 1871.

MR. W—— presented himself at the Embassy, and informed me that he was going to leave Paris in a balloon, and offered to take despatches to England.

I declined his offer, but gave him a letter of my own, and also one at the request of a private person. He said he should take his departure immediately, and as I heard nothing more of him, I concluded he had done so.

This was some time before permission had been granted to British subjects to leave Paris.

I afterwards heard that he had again called at the Embassy in my absence, shortly after the list of

British subjects desiring to cross the Prussian lines had been closed, and then it was no longer possible to include any one else in it.

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

Dear Philip,

Versailles, May 1, 1871.

I FORGOT to put the inclosed in yesterday. The Government troops are very nearly into Issy, and things look certainly brighter. I saw the troops working yesterday in the trenches, and they were quite close to the fort. It remains to be seen whether the insurgents will fight to the last; if they do, it will still be a long and nasty business before it is over.

Your affectionate,

HENRY WODEHOUSE.

My dear Philip,

May 9, 1871.

THE assault is expected to come off in the course of the next twenty-four hours, if Thiers does not interfere in the meantime with MacMahon's plans. He has an attack of rheumatism, which it is hoped will keep him quiet. I hope the assault may be successful. On it depend our hopes, as far as the Embassy is concerned, of getting back to Paris, as,



of course, if the Prussians take the place, which they will not be sorry, I expect, to do, if the French fail, we shall have to go elsewhere. I am not sanguine, but there is a fair chance of success. Conolly thinks there is no doubt the troops will fight well, but the attack will have to be a sharp one to be successful, and I cannot help fearing that they may not have got it in them. It will probably be by the Bois near Auteuil.

My dear Philip, *Versailles, May 26, 1871.*

WE may congratulate ourselves on having seen Paris before its destruction. I have been contemplating the burning daily from Meudon. Yesterday I counted nine distinct large fires in separate quarters, and saw and heard several tremendous explosions. At this rate there will soon be little left of the whole place. I always anticipated a dreadful catastrophe at last, Thiers by his temporizing having given them so much rope, and I never had any hopes of these desperate ruffians coming to any sort of terms. The town at last was completely in the hands of Pyat, Delescluze, and such men, who were simply madmen. I don't know whether I told you that we happened, with our glasses, to see the first troops enter Paris at the Porte de St. Cloud. The whole of that quarter

